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ought to be the original German one, "mahlstock," or its full English equivalent—paint stick. The quite prevalent word "maulstick," having no meaning at all, is more foolish even than the other.

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NEXT to a sensible criticism from an expert, a looking-glass is as good a critic as you can have while at work. The defects in tone, color, drawing, and balance of composition a reversed view of your picture will reveal to you, must be learned by experiment to be credited.

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THERE is no better muscular exercise for a painter than fencing. The practice gives the wrist a wonderful strength and suppleness, and the exercise of the rest of the body is an admirable tonic for a system necessarily somewhat enervated by close mental and physical indoor application.

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SMOKE painted against a light sky has always a warm tendency of color: against deep shade it is cold. All the great landscape painters give us russet smoke when warm light is seen behind it and blue smoke against shadow. The system is absolutely correct, as a very slight examination of nature will demonstrate, but it is not new. It is alluded to by as ancient an authority as Aristotle.

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YOUR easel should be as firm and substantial as you can command. No matter how heavy it is, a good set of rollers will easily make it controllable. The light and flimsy easels you can buy for a dollar or so are useful as makeshifts, but not when better ones are procurable. An incautious touch or pressure will tumble a light easel over, and it is always likely to be shaken while you are at work. A very convenient kind of easel is that with a couple of drawers in which you can keep your tubes of color, knives, rags and the rest, all ready to hand.

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ON the subject of the colors used by the modern artist, George C. Lambdin observes: "We have an immense number of pigments, tints of every sort, nine tenths of which should be excluded from the palette of every conscientious worker. Among the pigments prepared by the modern colormen many of the most attractive are utterly untrustworthy. There are, for instance, three colors which it seems almost impossible to dispense with—chrome yellow, carmine and Prussian blue. Samples of these, hung in a strong light, will, within a year, completely lose their essential properties, turning green and black. We have a good supply of yellows of every shade, some of them quite durable; we are pretty well furnished with blues, but good reds are very few. The reds of iron are too dull, the madder preparations are too weak, vermilion is excellent in its place, but there is absolutely no true red of good body and quite durable. If the painter had a perfect yellow, a perfect red and a perfect blue, tints which completely corresponded with nature's colors, he would need no more. But he cannot get them, and the best he can do under the circumstances is stick to a simple palette and keep it clean."

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A STUDENT recently returned from Munich says: "When I went abroad, fresh from the Art Students' League, I had the reputation of being a good draughtsman and a fair painter in the sketch class. When I entered the school in Munich I found that I knew nothing. Instead of making crayon drawings from the model on a sheet of charcoal paper I was called on to do them life-size; instead of little sketches, I had to paint my models six feet high, and not being exactly a six-footer myself had to mount a box to paint the heads. I had, moreover, to finish work on this scale in the same time that I had been accustomed to give a small drawing or study. At first I was in despair. At the end of the first week I seriously thought of throwing it all up and coming home. At the end of the month I was sick and disgusted with myself; at the end of the second month I had become interested, and by the commencement of my second quarter I wished my life would last forever. I acquired the power of working on a large scale slowly, for my eye had become used to seeing things too small, but while I advanced in it, I was amazed to see how strong and ready my hand became at small work, sketches and drawings from life and memory and compositions. It is a great school, that of big work. Now that I have been through it I wonder, sometimes, how I got as far as I did before I found it out."

ARTIST.

## Amateur Photography.

CONDUCTED BY GEORGE G. ROCKWOOD.

### OUT-OF-DOOR PORTRAITURE.

W. P. A. asks: "Why do I not get a good portrait with instantaneous exposure out-of-doors, or, say, on a piazza?" This inquiry covers almost every exigency in photography. Portraiture requires more favorable surroundings and adjuncts than any other branch of the art. The camera, of course, records what is before it. If the lights are too much diffused, or too much concentrated, and the pose not skilful, the unfailing instrument will so present it. Therefore, as pictures taken *al fresco* are ordinarily in lights and under conditions beyond control, portraiture under such conditions can rarely be successful. In landscape photography, and in composition pictures, figures may be introduced with good effect, but purely as accessory. When such figures look as if they were intended for portraits, an artistic effect is almost always lacking. Many, in other respects, good compositions which I have seen have been spoiled by the conscious attitudes of persons in the foreground evidently posing for their portraits, and looking at the instrument. In the fine compositions of Robinson and Sutcliffe, of England, faces are rarely turned toward the beholder, and while life and animation are given by the presence of figures, the idea of portraiture is not considered.

For successful portraiture out-of-doors, especially on piazzas, a suitable plain background should be provided against which the figures may be properly relieved without the spotty effect produced by foliage and other distant objects. The light should also be so cut off or controlled as to come from one source only. The side opposite to the source of light should also be covered with drapery in order to prevent reflections. With due care a fair skylight effect may be produced in such a place. In the field, I question very much whether successful portraits may be made other than as accessory to compositions or pictures. Possibly our correspondent may refer to technical difficulties, such as flatness, or, the reverse, spottiness.

It is still difficult for the photographer to realize the rapid action on the gelatine plate, and therefore nine out of ten pictures are overtimed. The overtiming asserts itself by a quick flashing up of the image when developed, and a flat, tame print. The remedy, of course, is to employ smaller diaphragms or have shorter exposures. In all out-of-door work the bromide of potassium solution should be ready for instant use in case the picture comes up too rapidly in the early development. It is the safest plan *always* to start a plate with a developer in combination with a retarding solution. If the exposure has been too long there will be time to save the plate. If the exposure has been correct, the plate may be taken out, washed, and placed in the normal developer, and brought out in the usual manner.

If, on the other hand, the picture has been under-timed, a fresh, soft developer should be used. If it cannot be brought out by this means, there will be strong contrasts of black and white, and great want of detail both in the lights and the shadows. What should be half tints will be white spots, and shadows which ought to be full of detail, will be inkly black. Again, should all the accessories of the photographer be favorable, an exposure under such circumstances would not be "instantaneous." In all portraiture I find it desirable to work slower plates, or in some way increase the time of exposure that there may be some latitude for working.

It is much more difficult even under portrait skylights, where everything is favorable, to get uniform results when plates require but *one* second exposure, than when there is a margin of two or three seconds. The human mind and the human hand are not sufficiently on the alert to discriminate in regard to parts of a second; if one second of time is the correct exposure, it requires but a small fraction of a second, plus or minus, to quite undo the result.

THOROUGHNESS.—As there is no royal road to art, so there is no "short cut" to excellence in photography. Uniform painstaking are the only means of securing good results. Persons in trouble come to me for guidance when it is evident that their difficulties come solely from want of painstaking. When their little omissions or commissions are pointed out the general apology is that they "thought it would not matter." It should be an unvarying rule to attend with scrupulous care to every little detail, assuming, at the outset, that everything *may* be wrong and work-

ing with the determination to overcome every fault of camera, plate-holder, lens, etc. It might be said that excessive care means slow work. It means just the reverse. Care adds to certainty, and certainty means speed.

MEASLES.—Another correspondent sends prints made on "Ponsé" paper, which show a malignant form of "measles." After a number of experiments, I have concluded that it is occasioned by using a liquid lubricator on the prints. The tint of the paper is imparted, unquestionably, by some form of aniline. This is soluble in alcohol; so, when the liquid lubricator, which is of alcohol, is applied, it dissolves a portion of the color. The remedy is apparent; use a *dry* lubricator.

HYPO STAINS.—Many of the negatives amateurs bring to me to be printed have ugly stains and markings which are strong tell-tales of negligence in minor details. Unfortunately, the impression exists that it is not necessary to wash the hypo thoroughly after fixing, because the alum is a perfect eliminator. The latter statement is true; but the compound formed by alum and hypo is not always a harmless one. Mr. Burton, the eminent English photographer, has recently written some exhaustive articles upon this subject, demonstrating plainly that this combination at times becomes an insoluble compound and the source of deterioration in the negative. The editor of The British Journal claims that a trace of hypo is not "the true enemy that we have to fight," but it is an unstable compound formed with it that is the cause of destruction both of negatives and of prints. Without going into the chemical question, it is safe to assume with the writer that, "given a print or a negative fresh from the fixing bath, and containing in its substance sodium and silver hyposulphites, the application of alum solutions will bring about the same changes. The reaction may be so gradual, especially in a film of gelatine, that no immediate alteration in the appearance of either negative or print is visible, and if carefully and thoroughly washed, *at once*, the formation of deleterious matter may be prevented; but it would be scarcely reasonable to suppose that the application of alum under such circumstances, though it decomposes the hypo, converts it into harmless substances, or adds to the chances of permanence of the image. Rather, we should imagine, it adds to the chance of danger, for while an equally careful washing is needful in order to remove the soluble silver salts, the film, be it gelatine or albumen, contains within itself the elements of *rapid* change, and in the case of imperfect washing is even more liable to deterioration than if the alum had not been applied." As Mr. Burton very justly points out, and as others have done before, it is not the hypo, as such, that gives rise to the troubles usually charged to it, but the soluble silver compounds formed in fixing, and these can only be removed by careful washing. If by any course of treatment they should be transformed into insoluble compounds in the film itself, they can scarcely fail to prove detrimental; hence, we urge that the "elimination" of the hypo by means of alum, if resorted to as a substitute for washing, is detrimental rather than otherwise.

In spite of the existence of a large number of amateur photographic societies in England, it would seem that formulas and methods of working are unwillingly given by the professionals. At the foot of the Rigi on Lake Lucerne, I met an English amateur, admirably equipped with apparatus and about to take a picture. Feeling interested in his work, I made his acquaintance, and in the course of the morning gave him many practical suggestions as to choice of views, selection of time, light, and other matters. He finally asked: "Do photographers in America usually impart information to amateurs as freely as you have done to me?" I expressed the opinion that we depend a little more, in our country, upon our brains and skill than on locked-up formulas; that all practical information was freely imparted, at any rate by many of our professional photographers. "Well," said he, "it would be impossible to get such information from an English professional, without a large corkscrew and a guinea concealed in the handle!"

MANY amateurs bring their negatives to me for criticism. The common art fault is the failure to carry the development far enough. Shadows should be thoroughly brought out and the high lights given sufficient density to secure good results. The fixing bath, almost invariably reduces somewhat the strength of the negative, sometimes entailing a severe tax upon the eyesight in the dim light of the developing room. But I can see no objection to increasing the light after the image is well brought up. It is a good plan to have your lantern so arranged that one sheet of the yellow paper or one thickness of the colored glass can be removed at pleasure.

IN PHOTOGRAPHING AN INTERIOR, "if a light comes within range of the lens, you will have an opportunity to display your tact, since the negative would be ruined unless something were done to diminish the glare of light. You may be able to blanket up the intrusive window, excluding every particle of light and then get illumination from an adjoining window, or through doorways from other lighted apartments. If you have patience you will then take a small wall mirror, and, keeping it in motion, cast its reflection into the dim parts of the room during the period of exposure. In the mean while, you may have sheets hung so that they will reflect light while themselves not within range. If the light is too strong in any one part of the room, the corresponding part of the negative will be "cooked" before the other parts are, perhaps, half done, and the result will be unsatisfactory. The easiest way to photograph an interior, is, of course, to photograph *from* the side at which the light enters, or across the angle of light. After the general interior has had sufficient exposure, it is sometimes feasible to remove the coverings from the windows (after carefully replacing the cap on the instrument) and to then give the whole one second, or more, exposure according to the strength of the light at the windows. In such a case the light should be so arranged that strong streams of light and lines of shadow do not produce an unpleasant effect on the floor or elsewhere." [ALEXANDER BLACK.]